Dear Dick, Progress/Situation Report 2/24/76

I've just finished the last chapter of the second part, taken a walk for exercise and to work off a little of the euphoria at the progress and the amount of work I've done, and hoping not to hear further from Playboy but having been told to expect a call about this time for a final check, I'll try to update and forecast.

It is a slight exaggeration to say that I've finished the full draft of the first two parts. I've not begun to write the second chapter, the end of Part 1. I'm awaiting developments and if there seems to be need I'll let it wait and go ahead with the third part when I've read the second and corrected it. I have built the book so that much can come out of necessary and lead into this one in that way. However, I have enough for it now. Delay will be from expectation of still more.

One other chapter is incomplete. I'll have to listen to hours of tapes and transcribe the parts I want to use. I'm doing this extra work for color, realism and a switch that I think will be quite attractive, juxtaposing the nobodies Ray with the eminence Percy Foreman. My recollections of the dry humor and the natural ridiculousness of the situation especially John and Jerry let me draw out of them is that it will be uproarious as well as a significant addition to the story. We have substantiation of just about all they said and what is without side documentation is not libellous. If it were worth the trouble I could substantiate that but it isn't necessary.

I have this chapter started and outlined in the event I was delayed but I hope to listen to and transcribe what I want from the tapes tomorrow. I may be able to start tonight if I can prepare a convocation speech I have to deliver Friday with time left.

The reading and correcting will take some time. I expect to do it next. But I also want to do it with some continuity. Because I have to be away Thursday and Friday I won't begin until after I return.

The third part is "The New Evidence." I have enough-all-for the first part. The second part is in court. I am getting more than I have. Until I see it I can't evaluate it. I can assure you that it will be no more than the government feels it must deliver and surely will be enormously less than it should be. More is not essential because I have enough for book purposes now. It is essential for other purposes, including a second life for the book in the future. I have enough now to take the "new evidence" road in court and for Ray to file successful civil actions if decent, experienced counsel were available. I can write and fight at the same time. I have, often.

If I'm lucky maybe I can complete the reading and correcting next week. It is my target. If I have not had a response from the student-help office of the second local college by then I'll have to consider spending more for retyping. And then find a typist.

I set the last chapter of the second part off by itself because while it fits and is essential it is also a separate story, one a Hollywood friend thinks can make a movie. (He is a production director of experience but perhaps not the best judge.) It is titled with a grim pun, "Died In Battle." The judge whose death seems mysterious in was W. Preston Battle. It solves his death while saying what died in him. A prosecutor who framed Ray precipitated a heart attack while the judge was preparing to order a hearing. They argued. The judge dropped dead over his draft and other papers of which I have copies. There is more but you'll see in time. It would make a good story aside from this case.

Three units of government are supposed to be searching for records for me in this case. The next calendar call is on the 15th. I do not expect compliance or the claim of it by then. They indicated opposing it in two weeks that end tomorrow but I don't think they now will because they know I can disprove any allegation of compliance and by now may fear further proven charges of perjury. I think they'll not risk it, anyway. The cost estimate of the first to estimate is $325 plus copying charges. We'll hear last from the FBI and they'll estimate as high as they can. Hastily,